



## Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Date: May 2, 2006

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** ITA and Serviced Bureau Supervisors

**FROM:** Mary Ann McFate /s/  
Acting Director of Administration

**SUBJECT:** Employee Performance Files (EPF)  
Maintenance and Audit Process  
(File code 293)

The attached Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Employee Performance Files is implemented so that Supervisors are familiar with documents required to be maintained in the EPF. If you have any questions concerning the content or handling of an EPF, please contact your servicing [Human Resources Specialist](#).

*e-Attachment*

EPF Audit Checklist

## **EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE FILE (EPF)**

### **1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Employee Performance File (EPF) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is for the purpose of guiding supervisors on the maintenance, security, and retention period of documentation in EPFs. This SOP will also establish an EPF audit process in accordance with 5 CFR 293.402(b) and 293.404 (d).

### **2. SCOPE**

This SOP applies to all ITA employees and serviced bureau employees.

### **3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

The following are the general requirements in the EPFs: The rating official or designated management official must maintain an EPF for each employee containing performance-related records needed to manage performance. Performance appraisal ratings are used as a basis for most personnel actions, such as promotions, reassignments, within-grade increases, quality step increases, removals, reduction-in-grade, retention under reduction-in-force procedures, training and awards. Rating officials will be better able to implement the Agency's performance management system if they have EPF records to support actions.

### **4. EPF CONTENTS**

Employee performance files must contain performance plans and performance appraisals for the current year and the four years. They should also contain forms and documents in support of performance actions that are based solely on performance, such as forms showing training to correct or improve performance, and removals or other actions based on performance. Additional items that can be included are Recommendation for Recognition (CD-326), Notification of Personnel Actions (SF-50) documenting awards, justification for non-monetary recognition; Letters of Commendation; Individual Development Plans (IDP); and position descriptions (PD).

### **5. ACCESS**

EPFs are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 and must be protected from improper disclosure. The employee, his or her designated representative, or an agency official who has a need for the documents for official purposes, must be given access to the EPF. The files must be kept in a locked file cabinet.

## **6. RETENTION OF RECORDS**

Performance related documents should be retained in the EPF for as long as necessary beyond the designated retention period when the documents are needed in connection with an on-going administrative, negotiated, quasi-judicial proceeding. An appraisal of unacceptable performance in which a notice of proposed demotion or removal is issued but not effected must be destroyed no later than 30 days after the employee has completed the 1-year of acceptable performance from the date of the advanced written notice of unacceptable performance. Material related to employees conduct and other items that are not performance related should not be included in the EPF.

6.1. Officials authorized to maintain EPFs are responsible for the annual review and purging of the EPFs. Records kept in an automated system are subject to the same requirements as outlined in this SOP.

## **7. DISPOSITION OF RECORDS**

7.1. When an employee transfers from one operating unit within the Department to another, the rating official must forward the employee's appraisal record to the gaining supervisor.

7.2. When an employee transfers to another Federal agency or leaves Federal service, the rating official must forward all employee personnel records to the ITA Office of Human Resources Management Office (OHRM).

7.3. When an employee separates from the government, the Office of Human Resources will forward the performance records to the Federal Records Center.

## **8. AUDITING**

8.1. The OHRM will periodically audit EPFs to verify that they contain current and accurate performance documentation. OHRM will use the EPF Audit Checklist (attached) to ensure that performance plans, mandatory mid-term progress review and summary performance appraisals were completed, and that the last four performance ratings are filed in the EPF. The auditor will review a random sample of EPFs shortly after performance management suspenses have passed.

8.2. Questions on these processes may be addressed to the Office of Human Resources, Strategic Workforce Management Group at 202-482-3947.

**Employee Performance File (EPF) AUDIT CHECKLIST**

**Employee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Program Area/Bureau:** \_\_\_\_\_

The EPF auditor will inspect the EPF to ensure that documents covering the **current plan** and the **last four years** are included:

**Current Performance Plan on file: Yes / No**

|  |    |    |    |    |
|--|----|----|----|----|
| <b>Last 4-Years:</b>   | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Approving official, rating official, and employee <b>signed Employee Performance Plans</b>           |    |    |    |    |
| Approving official, rating official, and employee <b>signed employee Mid Term Progress Review</b>    |    |    |    |    |
| Approving official, rating official, and employee <b>signed employee Summary Performance Rating.</b> |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Final summary rating performance level indicated.</b>   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Narrative supports summary rating assigned.</b>   |    |    |    |    |
| National Finance Center (NFC) ratings match ratings on file  |    |    |    |    |

In addition to the required documents above, the following items may be maintained in the EPF:

- Supervisors’ notes justifying the performance appraisal rating and or awards
- Individual Development Plans.
- CD-326s (Recommendation for Recognition)
- SF-50s (Notification of Personnel Action) documenting monetary or non-monetary awards
- Non-monetary awards such as Time Off Awards, Bronze Medal Awards, etc.
- Official Letters of Commendation
- Forms showing training to correct performance
- Removals or other actions based on performance

**Signature of Auditor/Reviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Audit:** \_\_\_\_\_